

Reptile and Amphibian Merit Badge at Riverbend Park

Welcome to the Reptile and Amphibian Merit Badge program at Riverbend Park. The program is held at the Riverbend Visitor Center located at 8700 Potomac Hills Street in Great Falls.

Below is the recommended homework to be completed before the program:

We recommend that you download the merit badge worksheets from meritbadge.com and bring these worksheets to class. These worksheets help scouts organize their homework and classwork.

Requirement 2. Come prepared to discuss the approximate number of species and general geographic distribution of reptiles and amphibians in the United States. Prepare a list of the most common species found in your local area or state.

Requirement 7. Describe in detail six venomous snakes and the one venomous lizard found in the United States. Describe their habits and geographic range. Tell what you should do in case of a bite by a venomous species.

Requirement 9c. Using visual aids come prepared to give a brief talk on three different reptiles and amphibians.

Requirement 10. Tell five superstitions or false beliefs about reptiles and amphibians and give a correct explanation for each. Give seven examples of unusual behavior or other true facts about reptiles and amphibians.

What to bring to the program:

- Bring your blue card (Riverbend does not have blue cards.)
- Bring your completed homework. It is OK if you cannot complete the homework before class. You can bring completed homework in at a later date for sign-off.
- Bring/wear weather appropriate clothing/outerwear. We will not go outdoors in heavy rain or thunderstorms. Boy Scout uniform not required.
- Bring a pencil and pen.
- Bring a flashlight, if the program is held after dusk.
- We recommend that you download the merit badge worksheets from meritbadge.com and bring these worksheets to class. These worksheets help scouts organize their homework and classwork.
- Bring a snack and drink or money to purchase some at the visitor center. Bring more substantial food if your program is longer than four hours.

Homework to be completed after the program:

The merit badge counselor will do a demonstration or explain the process for completing the final merit badge requirements. Your scout must provide evidence of completion in order to obtain blue card sign-off. Digital photographs of your scout doing the element and a picture of the completed requirement will be sufficient evidence.

If your scout has a strong understanding of the requirement, he is welcome to complete this requirement at any time. Remember to document work and completion via digital pictures.

Requirement 8. Complete 8a or 8b.

8a. Maintain one or more reptiles or amphibians for at least a month. Record food accepted, eating methods, changes in coloration, shedding of skins, and general habits; or keep the eggs of a reptile from the time of laying until hatching; or keep the eggs of an amphibian from the time of laying until their transformation into tadpoles (frogs) or larvae (salamanders).

OR

8b. Choose a reptile or amphibian that you can observe at a local zoo, aquarium, nature center, or other such exhibit (such as your classroom or school). Study the specimen weekly for a period of three months. At each visit, sketch the specimen in its captive habitat and note any changes in its coloration, shedding of skins, and general habits and behavior. Find out, either from information you locate on your own or by talking to the caretaker, what this species eats and what are its native habitat and home range, preferred climate, average life expectancy, and natural predators. Also identify any human caused threats to its population and any laws that protect the species and its habitat. After the observation period, share what you have learned with your counselor. The Riverbend Visitor Center is open year round, noon-4pm on weekends, Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. Check website for holiday hours.

Once the prework, class work and post homework are completed, all elements of the merit badge will be complete.

If your scout needs blue card sign-off after the class date, please call 703-759-9018 to arrange a time to meet with a merit badge counselor.

We're looking forward to working with your scout.

Riverbend's Merit Badge Counselors

Karen Sheffield, Ethan Kuhnenn, Tina Driskell, Chris Kopsick, Michelle Brannon, Marijke Gate

Karen Sheffield

Senior Interpreter, Riverbend Park

Fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/riverbend

703-759-9018

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